

For Immediate Release



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## **Rooted in Beirut, flourishing globally:** **The American University of Beirut signs agreement with Municipality of Pafos to open a campus in Cyprus**

In a ceremony that took place in Pafos, Cyprus on Friday, April 8, 2022, the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the Municipality of Pafos signed a landmark agreement to establish the American University of Beirut–Mediterraneo campus. This marks the first time in its history AUB establishes a campus outside of Lebanon, after having educated students and cared for the health of its community and beyond for over 155 years.

With the opening of its campus in Pafos, coupled with other initiatives to become a more global, diverse, and impactful university, AUB seeks to serve a broader audience while remaining firmly rooted in Lebanon. It also aims to enrich the experience of its students and faculty in Beirut with extensive interaction between the twin campuses, including exchange opportunities, collaborative research projects, as well as expanded online and hybrid learning opportunities.

The plan is to welcome the first class of students to the American University of Beirut–Mediterraneo campus in fall 2023 to pursue a variety of undergraduate and graduate programs. Bachelor's degree programs will include politics, philosophy, and economics; psychology; computer science; industrial engineering; and business administration - management. While master's degree programs will include engineering management and business analytics.

AUB's mission has long been to deliver not only knowledge, creativity, learning, and healthcare but to promote free discourse and advance academic freedom everywhere. Through its programs and initiatives, the university inspires hope and creates opportunities for progress and tolerance, and continuously works towards better days for the people of Lebanon and the region. By extending beyond Lebanon to reach new students who can benefit from AUB's unique brand of education, the university moves one step closer to fulfilling its mission.

## **The signing ceremony**

The signing ceremony was attended by the President of the Republic of Cyprus Nicos Anastasiades; US Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Lee Satterfield; Ambassador, AUB Trustee, and Chairman of the AUB International Advisory Council Frank G. Wisner; Mayor of the Municipality of Pafos Phedonas Phedonos; AUB President Dr. Fadlo Khuri; in addition to ambassadors and officials as well as other members of the AUB Board of Trustees.

In his welcome address, Mayor of Pafos Phedonas Phedonos noted that “this evening is historic and will be recorded in the calendar of this small Mediterranean town as one of the most important milestones in its 2,400-year history.” He said, “What matters to us now is that the arrival of the American University of Beirut in Pafos places us on the world map of university education. Few universities around the world have the tradition, history and influence that this University has.”

Phedonos said that AUB–Mediterraneo will capitalize on “the long and successful experience of the mother AUB to manage issues of coexistence and cooperation of groups with different religions and cultural backgrounds.” He continued that the university “is in a position to convincingly convey the messages of brotherhood, solidarity, mutual respect and equality, which are the foundations for any honest compromise but also for the establishment and development of a democratic and prosperous society. This may not be very important for a university institution in the Western world but it acquires major importance in our wider region.”

AUB President Dr. Fadlo Khuri then delivered his address. “In order to serve a broader audience, we are becoming a more global, diverse, and inclusive American University of Beirut, while remaining firmly anchored in our eternal home Beirut,” he said. He spoke about the “Global AUB” vision which includes expanding in the region, exploring the establishment of hubs in Africa, planning for a greater presence in North America, and growing the university’s online offerings. “The establishment of this new campus in Cyprus will enrich the interchange of ideas, knowledge, and purpose that is already taking place at our campus in Beirut, and spread the unique culture of our magnificent university, enhancing both AUB’s diversity and its excellence simultaneously.”

Khuri added that “by extending beyond Lebanon to reach the many who deserve the unique brand of AUB’s education, we move one step closer to fulfilling our mission. By introducing that which is most meaningful and enduring in the unique culture of this great research-intensive, liberal arts university, itself deeply rooted and acculturated in Beirut, more broadly to the wider world, we preserve much of what is most worthwhile about Lebanon, extending its influence and identity beyond its shores.”

Ambassador Frank G. Wisner, member of AUB Board of Trustees and chairman of the International Advisory Council of AUB, also spoke during the event stating that a page is being added in the university's history and to America's contribution to higher learning in the region. He said, "The new campus will permit AUB to amplify its message and offerings, adding to our core institutional base and reaching future scholars in this region. We recognize the Eastern Mediterranean is regaining strategic, geopolitical, and economic significance and we want to be a part of it."

Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Lee Satterfield then spoke about being proud of the long partnership with the American University of Beirut describing it as "a model of American values and education standards and a beacon in the region and the world." She added that "for more than 150 years, AUB has provided the highest-quality American-style education to students from around the world. AUB graduates have throughout its history become global citizens, serving as leaders in governments, the private sector, civil society, and the sciences."

"Today is a historic day for the American University of Beirut, for the people of the Republic of Cyprus and for global higher education. The United States is deeply committed to international education and supports Cyprus' goal of becoming an educational hub in Europe and AUB's goal of becoming a truly international institution," Satterfield said.

And in his address, President of the Republic of Cyprus Nicos Anastasiades said "Undoubtedly, the establishment of the American University of Beirut, in combination with other corresponding successful actions preceded by the Municipal Council, consolidate Pafos on the map of higher academic education, while at the same time provide substantial dimension and content to the vision and policy of the State for the promotion of our country into a regional educational and research center."

He added, "I have no doubt that the American University of Beirut will become the new cultural center, the new hub for exchanging ideas and knowledge in our country."

The event included a short film about AUB and a presentation of the AUB–Mediterraneo campus master plan, developed by Dar Al-Handasah Consultants (Shair and Partners), which blends the rich cultures of Lebanon and Cyprus in a powerful and sustainable way. An exchange of symbolic gifts also took place where AUB President Dr. Fadlo Khuri handed the Mayor of the Municipality of Pafos Phedonas Phedonos AUB's 150th commemorative coin set, and Mayor Phedonos handed President Khuri Aphrodite's bust, which is the symbol of the city of Pafos. This was followed by an open reception and an official dinner at Elysium Hotel.

**ENDS**

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## **Note to Editors**

### **About AUB**

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 900 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 9,500 students. AUB currently offers more than 140 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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